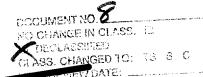
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NSC BRIEFING

5 OCTOBER 1955

## DEATH OF GREEK PRIME MINISTER PAPAGOS

- I. The death of Prime Minister Papagos will hasten development of the serious political crisis in Greece, which has been building up during the past year.
  - A. His death occurs at a particularly difficult time, while Greek passions are inflamed over the Cyprus issue.
  - B. Foreign Minister Stephanopolous is considered the most likely of several candidates to head a provisional government.
- II. Greek law provides for national elections within 45 days after establishment of such a provisional government.
  - A. While King Paul and his political advisors may manage to postpone the required elections for a few months, the period of a relatively stable Greek government (such as was inaugurated under Papagos in 1952) is past.
- III. The Rally Party, created by Papagos with the collaboration of various politicans and political factions, has suffered from internal strife and defection during the past 18 months.
  - A. As the ailing prime minister became less active, these trends became more pronounced.
  - B. His death makes certain that the Rally Party will have disintegrated by the time national elections are held.



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- IV. Despite King Paul's interest in promoting political groupings which will give Greece a stable, Western-oriented government, a return to Greek coalition governments--based on splinter party alignments--appears inevitable.
  - A. If the present climate of popular frustration and irritation continues to election day, an unstable coalition government, containing strong leftist and neutralist influence, will be the most likely result.